

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: September 17, 2001

REPLY TO: KECN-4
ATTN OF:

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265/SA-63)

to: Joe DeHerrera
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

Proposed Action: Pelican Creek Crossing Improvement

Project No: 1992-026-01

Wildlife Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis (See App. A of the Wildlife Mitigation Program EIS): 1.13 Culvert Removal/Replacement to Improve Fish Passage.

Location: Pelican Creek, Union County, Oregon

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), the Grande Ronde Model Watershed Program (GRMWP), and the Union County Public Works Department (UCPWD)

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA provides funds to the Grande Ronde Model Watershed Program which cooperates with local agencies and landowners to plan, fund, and implement anadromous fish habitat restoration projects in the Grande Ronde Basin. The GRMWP has agreed to partially fund three bridge replacement projects with the Union County Public Works Department. This Supplement Analysis covers only the bridge replacement activities that will take place at the Pelican Creek crossing.

The Union County Public Works Department is responsible for replacing structurally deficient bridges with structures able to pass 50-year peak flow events. The UCPWD replacement structures of choice, due to budget limitations, are large 8-10 foot corrugated metal pipes. These pipes would meet peak flow requirements but would be less than ideal for fish passage. The GRMWP proposes to provide funding assistance to UCPWD to upgrade replacement structures to full-channel spanning stringer bridges. These full-channel spanning structures will provide the best possible conditions for fish passage, water quality, and accommodation of peak flows.

Analysis: The compliance checklist for this project was completed by Richard Comstock with the Union County Public Works Department and meets the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species located in the general vicinity of the project are gray wolf, Canada lynx, bald eagle, Ute ladies' tresses, Howell's spectacular thelypody, bull trout, Snake River chinook salmon, and Snake River summer steelhead. It was determined by Mark Henjium, a non-game biologist with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) NE Region, that the project would have no effect on gray wolf, Canada lynx, or bald eagle. It was determined by Tim Walters, a fish biologist with the ODFW NE Region, that the project would have no effect on bull trout and Snake River chinook. The project site does not contain habitat suitable for Howell's spectacular thelypody or Ute ladies' tresses, which was confirmed by Penny Hall, a

district biologist with the U.S. Forest Service in LaGrande. A Biological Assessment was submitted by BPA to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on August 20, 2001 which concluded that the Pelican Creek project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, Snake River summer steelhead. NMFS concurred with BPA's determination on September 10, 2001 and also concluded that the proposed actions are not likely to adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat for chinook salmon in the long-term.

The Pelican Creek bridge replacement project does not involve activities that have the potential to affect cultural resources through ground disturbance, since the subject site has previously been disturbed. The Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) was contacted in June 2000 to determine if the existing bridge structure itself had cultural resource significance. The Grande Ronde Model Watershed Program received a "no effect" determination from the Oregon SHPO on September 6, 2000.

Standard in-channel water quality protection procedures will be followed during bridge replacement construction. Activities affecting the channel will be conducted only during the identified instream work window. The Union County Public Works Department is in the process of obtaining the necessary Oregon Department of State Lands and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit approvals for this project. No construction will be authorized to begin until the applicant has obtained all required permits.

Public involvement associated with this project has included review and approval by the Grande Ronde Model Watershed Program Technical Committee and Board of Directors which are composed of representatives of the tribes, federal, state, and local agencies and private landowners. In addition, Board of Director review of this project has been conducted in open public meetings, which are regularly announced prior to monthly meetings. Proceedings of these meetings are widely distributed to individuals, agencies, and organizations.

Findings: The project is generally consistent with Section 7.6A.2, 7.6B.3, & 7.8E.1, of the Northwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program. This Supplement Analysis finds 1) that the proposed actions are substantially consistent with the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265) and ROD, and, 2) that there are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed actions or their impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

CONCUR:

Shannon C. Stewart 9-17-2001
Shannon C. Stewart
Environmental Specialist

Thomas C. McKinney
Thomas C. McKinney
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 9-17-2001

Attachment:
NEPA Compliance Checklist
NMFS Concurrence Letter

cc: (w/o attachment)
Richard Comstock- Union County Public Works Department
Lyle Kuchenbecker – Grande Ronde Model Watershed Program